

Briefing Paper
Missouri SenioRx Commission Meeting – July 29
Topic - Outreach

The 2004-2005 Missouri SenioRx outreach campaign has two goals: (1) to increase enrollment by targeting the 150,932 individuals who meet the age and income, and possibly the insurance, guidelines of the Missouri SenioRx Program but are not current members, and, (2) retain and re-enroll the 22,000 current members.

This year's campaign will differ significantly from previous years. In 2002 and 2003, the program spent the bulk of outreach dollars on traditional media such as TV, radio and newspaper. This strategy was effective at maintaining the number of members from year to year, (i.e. approximately 22,000), but did not increase **overall** program enrollment. Further, the state's media vendors cannot guarantee the time and/or placement of radio, TV and newspaper ads; consequently, the SenioRx ads may reach as **many people as possible**, but do not target the program's primary beneficiary: low-income elderly.

In 2004 – 2005, the campaign will have two basic approaches: (1) a grassroots, community-based component that will target those zip codes with the largest population of potential eligibles, with the potential of using a public-relations firm to assist in the planning and execution of a grassroots-outreach campaign through the production of distribution materials and coordination of the media campaign, and, (2) an ancillary, rural component that will focus primarily on print media, namely, rural monthlies and weeklies. This change in approach is the result of lessons the program has learned: (1) Seniors are more likely to enroll in the program if someone they trust in *their own community*--preferably of similar age and ethnicity--endorses and explains the program, and, (2) Seniors need one-on-one help filling out the SenioRx application, especially those with limited education who may be illiterate, and will likely accept such help from someone they trust within *their own community*.

A successful grassroots campaign must: (1) identify the areas and zip codes in Missouri where the greatest number of potential eligibles live, and, (2) identify and then enlist the aid of grassroots, community, volunteer and health-related organizations within these areas to market and enroll eligible seniors. Some of these organizations have agreed to become enrollment partners without remuneration; others require a fee. *(Attachment 5 ranks the top eight areas, from the most populous to the least, and lists the most populated zip codes. Over half of the potential eligibles live in these areas as well as 80% of eligible minorities). (Attachment 6 will serve as a template for listing the grassroots organizations in each of the top eight counties/cities).*

Staff recommendation: Increase program enrollment by changing the primary focus of this year's outreach campaign from traditional media (i.e. TV, newspaper and radio) to a community-based, grassroots approach. The use of a public-relations firm to support the grassroots-outreach effort would significantly aid in the coordination and success of a grassroots campaign. The public-relations firm would be responsible for the creation and production of outreach materials for distribution, as well as the production of print advertisements, radio and/or television spots and generating opportunities for "free press." This would free up considerable time and resources for the SenioRx Program staff to focus on the day-to-day management and implementation of the grassroots-outreach operation.